

Claims

1. A method of gathering information relating to consumption of broadcast content by receiving stations, the method comprising:

5 preparing a schedule for broadcasting content;
including, in said schedule, an instruction to notify a given party of consumption of content; and
transmitting said schedule to a plurality of receiving stations.

10 2. A method of gathering information relating to consumption of broadcast content, the method comprising:

preparing a description of the content;
adding to said description an instruction to notify a given party of intended reception of said content; and

15 transmitting said description to a plurality of receiving stations.

3. A method according to claim 1 or 2, comprising including in said schedule or adding to said description an instruction to notify said given party of intended continued reception of said content.

20 4. A method according to any preceding claim, comprising including in said schedule or adding to said description an instruction to notify said given party of intended cessation of reception of content.

25 5. A method according to any preceding claim, comprising broadcasting said content if a receiving station notifies said given party that it intends to receive said content.

30 6. A method according to any preceding claim, comprising receiving notifications from receiving stations.

7. A method according to any preceding claim, comprising counting a number of receiving stations which notify said given party that they intend to receive said content.
- 5 8. A method according to any preceding claim, comprising counting a number of receiving stations which notify said given party that they are receiving said content.
9. A method according to any preceding claim, comprising preparing said 10 description of said content according to the Session Description Protocol.
10. A method according to any preceding claim, further comprising identifying a region from which said notification is received and transmitting said item of service in said region.
- 15 11. A method according to any preceding claim, further comprising identifying a region from which a notification is received and broadcasting said content in said region.
- 20 12. A method according to any preceding claim, further comprising identifying a region from which no notification is received and not broadcasting said content in said region.
- 25 13. A method, in a receiving station, of providing information relating to consumption of broadcast content, the method comprising:
 - receiving a schedule of broadcasting content;
 - determining whether said schedule includes an instruction to notify a given party of consumption of content; and
 - if said schedule includes said instruction, then transmitting a notification to 30 said given party.
14. A method, in a receiving station, of providing information relating to consumption of broadcast content, the method comprising:

receiving a description of said content;
determining whether an instruction has been added to said description, said instruction being to notify a given party of intended reception of said content; and
if said instruction is added to said description, then transmitting, to said given party, a notification of intended reception of said content.

15. A method according to claim 14, comprising:
receiving said content.

10 16. A method according to claim 15, further comprising:
transmitting, to said given party, a notification of intended continued reception of said content.

15 17. A method according to claim 16, further comprising:
transmitting, to said given party, a notification of intended cessation of reception of said content.

18. A method of controlling a broadcasting network, said broadcasting network including a base station for broadcasting content in a predetermined region, said method comprising:
determining whether a notification of intended reception of broadcast content is received from a receiving station located in said predetermined region and
if, said notification is received, broadcasting said content in said predetermined region.

25 19. A method according to claim 18, further comprising:
preparing a description of broadcast content;
adding to said description an instruction to notify a given party of intended reception of said content; and
transmitting said description to a plurality of receiving stations.

20. A method of controlling a broadcasting network, said broadcasting network including a base station for broadcasting content in a predetermined region, said method comprising:

5 counting a number of notifications of intended reception of broadcast content received from receiving stations located in said predetermined region and if said number of notifications equals or exceeds a predetermined number, broadcasting said content in said predetermined region.

21. A method according to claim 20, further comprising:

10 if said number of notifications falls below said predetermined number, stopping broadcast of said content in said predetermined region.

22. A computer program comprising instructions which, when executed by data processing apparatus, causes said data processing apparatus to perform the method 15 according to any preceding claim.

23. A computer program product storing the computer program according to claim 22.

20 24. A signal carrying the computer program according to claim 22.

25. Apparatus for gathering information relating to consumption of broadcast content, the apparatus comprising:

 means for preparing a description of the content;
 means for adding to said description an instruction to notify a given party of intended reception of said content; and
 means for transmitting said description to a plurality of receiving stations.

30 26. Apparatus for gathering information relating to consumption of broadcast content, the apparatus comprising:

 a processor for preparing a description of the content and adding to said description an instruction to notify a given party of intended reception of said content; and

a transmitter for transmitting said description to a plurality of receiving stations.

27. Apparatus for controlling a broadcasting network, said broadcasting network including a content provider, a network element for routing content and a base station for broadcasting content in a predetermined region, said apparatus comprising:

means for receiving, from receiving station, a notification of intended reception of broadcast content;

10 means for determining whether said notification is received from a receiving station located in said predetermined region and

means for instructing said network element to route said content to said base station for transmission in said predetermined region.

15 28. Apparatus for controlling a broadcasting network, said broadcasting network including a content provider, a network element for routing content and a base station for broadcasting content in a predetermined region, said apparatus comprising:

a receiver for receiving, from receiving station, a notification of intended reception of broadcast content;

20 a processor for determining whether said notification is received from a receiving station located in said predetermined region and

transmitter for instructing said network element to route said content to said base station for transmission in said predetermined region.

25 29. A receiving station for providing information relating to consumption of broadcast content, the receiving station comprising:

means for receiving a description of said content;

30 means for determining whether an instruction has been added to said description, said instruction being to notify a given party of intended reception of said content; and

means for transmitting, to said given party, a notification of intended reception of said content if said instruction is added to said description.

30. A receiving station for providing information relating to consumption of broadcast content, the receiving station comprising:

a receiver for receiving a description of said content;

5 a processor for determining whether an instruction has been added to said description, said instruction being to notify a given party of intended reception of said content; and

a transmitter for transmitting, to said given party, a notification of intended reception of said content if said instruction is added to said description.

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31. A system for presenting program schedule data on a display of receiving station, said system comprising at least a schedule data for broadcasting content, the schedule data being organized to include at least partly an instruction to notify a given party of consumption of content.

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32. A signal carrying a schedule or description of broadcast content which includes an instruction to notify a given party of consumption of content.